

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS SUNDAY 2 JULY 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You may tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings, at 08:15 Local Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Local Time in English, on HF as well as on many VHF and UHF repeaters around our country. Echolink listeners may connect to ZS0JPL for a relay.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you will find this as well as previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you may sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news, today:

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNBROKEN LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

THE ZS5 SPRINT THIS AFTERNOON

and

THE IARU HF CHAMPIONSHIPS NEXT WEEKEND

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNBROKEN LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

The President, Council and Members of the South African Radio League congratulate Dennis Wells, ZS1AU, and Artie Perold, ZS1HL, on 70 years of unbroken League membership as at 1 July 2017.

This is quite an achievement, well done Dennis and Artie!

THE ZS5 SPRINT THIS AFTERNOON

The ZS5 sprint is a fun activity to promote contacts between radio amateurs in Kwazulu-Natal and radio amateurs in Southern African countries. The Sprint runs from 14:00 to 15:00 UTC this afternoon.

ZS5 stations will give a RS or RST report and their town name or abbreviation. All other stations will give a RS or RST report and their provincial or country abbreviation. The ZS5 Sprint is a phone and CW contest on the 40 meter band using 7 000 to 7 040 kHz for CW and 7 063 to 7 100 and 7 130 to 7 200 kHz for phone.

ZS5 stations score 1 point for a QSO with a ZS5 station and 2 points for a QSO with a station in other ZS call areas or Southern African countries. All other stations score 2 points for a QSO with a ZS5 station and 1 point for a QSO with stations in their own or other ZS call areas (excluding ZS5) or Southern African countries. QSOs with the Highway ARC, ZS5HAM, the Durban ARC, ZS5D the Hibiscus Coast ARC, ZS5HAC, the Zululand ARC, ZS5ZLB, the Midlands

ARC, ZS5PMB, or the Noord Natal Amateurradioklub, ZS5NAK, are worth 5 points each. Only one contact per station is allowed.

Logs in ADIF, Cabrillo or MS Excel format and labelled “your call sign ZS5 Sprint”, shall be submitted by 10 July 2017 by e-mail to zs5contest@harc.org.za. A certificate will be awarded to the first, second and third places in the competition.

GAUTENG AMSAT SA/SARL SDR WORKSHOP MOVED TO 19 AUGUST

The date for the Gauteng AMSAT SA/SARL SDR workshop has been moved by one week to Saturday 19 August 2017. The change of date was necessary to ensure that supplies of the two different dongles can be assured. The programme will be in two parts. From 9 to 11 am, the workshop will focus on the VHF/UHF dongle with subjects like receiving amateur satellites, receiving weather satellites and some amateur astronomy projects and antennas.

The second part from 11 am to 2 pm will focus on the HF dongle, RF noise floor monitoring and automatic recording of data.

No final date for the Cape Town workshop, which will mainly focus on the VHF/UHF dongle, has been set. Deon Coetzee, ZR1DE, is planning for around mid-September 2017. To stay informed about the workshops, send an e-mail to admin@amsatsa.org.za and your name will be added to the mailing list.

THE IARU HF CHAMPIONSHIPS NEXT WEEKEND

The IARU HF Championships takes place over the second full weekend of July, beginning at 12:00 UTC on the Saturday and ending at 12:00 UTC on the Sunday. This year the contest takes place on 8 and 9 July 2017. Both Single and Multi-operator stations may operate the entire 24-hour period. The aim of the contest is to contact as many other amateurs, especially IARU member society HQ stations, around the world as possible using phone or CW on the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands.

IARU member society HQ stations send a signal report and official IARU member society abbreviation, e.g. 599 SARL. IARU International Secretariat club station NU1AW counts as a HQ station. Members of the IARU Administrative Council and the three IARU regional Executive committees send “AC”, “R1”, “R2” and “R3” as appropriate, e.g. ZS4BS will send 59 R1. All others send a signal report and ITU zone, for South Africa that is Zone 57. A complete exchange must be logged for each valid QSO. Find all the rules at www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-championship.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League

JULY RADIO ZS CAN BE DOWNLOADED

The July 2017 issue of Radio ZS is available for download from the League web site. Dennis, ZS4BS tells you how he sees the SARL National Convention. Tim, ZS6IM, tells about Radio Prague vs the Russian Bear and Chris, ZS6EZ,

takes you through the Arabian Nights. Find out more about the 50 lighthouses around the coast and the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend. The Pretoria ARC held a special tea for their veterans lots of photos. Also read VHF News by Mike, ZS2FM and CQ Contest by Dennis, ZS4BS.

BEACON NEWS

Our team of enthusiastic Beaconeers are still expanding. Just during the past week, Dez Bryington, ZS6DEZ, and Connel Paul, ZS6CNP, managed to get an Arduino fitted with a RF shield on the air. The beacon was spotted on 14.097 MHz at a signal-noise ratio of -25 dBm by Leon Uys, ZR6LU, over about 100 km. Dez says the software initially gave him many headaches, but now that it is working, he plans to tweak the output stage for a little more power so that he can get spotted a bit further. A photo of this exciting new prototype was circulated on the WhatsApp group. Amateurs interested in sharing some of their beaconding experiences are welcome to contact Leon Uys, ZR6LU, on 082 573 5580.

WHY EVERY LICENSED RADIO AMATEUR SHOULD SUPPORT THE IARU?

When AM broadcasting was inaugurated after World War I and amateur radio banned worldwide, governments realized that the radio spectrum has become valuable real estate. It was a wake-up call for all radio amateurs. To exist, Amateur Radio must have access to the radio frequency spectrum otherwise our equipment would be useless, like a boat without water. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) with their president Hiram Percy Maxim, 1AW, pleaded with the US Congress for some amateur radio spectrum, and in October 1919 the US government allocated all the useless wavelengths below 200 metres to radio amateurs in the USA. Soon several other countries in the world also followed suit. Read the full story in the July issue of Radio ZS.

TOWNHOUSE DWELLERS AND THE PROBLEM WITH BEAM ANTENNAS

Many radio amateurs who live in townhouse complexes are restricted and not allowed to erect even small VHF Yagi beam antennas, and if they are lucky they may have a vertical for repeaters. Unfortunately, this restriction robs keen VHF enthusiasts from getting out of their backyard and working some distant VHF stations too. The question is what can they do about it?

There are possibly a few answers to this problem. Firstly, try and erect a five-element horizontal Yagi for 144 MHz in the roof of your townhouse and point it in the preferred direction. If there is enough space then you could erect a second Yagi and beam it in a different direction, but use two separate co-axial cables. If you still need permission to do it then plead nicely with your townhouse committee and tell them that it won't be visible to those townhouse occupants who usually object to it nor harm anyone.

Secondly, if you are interested in 50 MHz then you could mount a horizontal

loop as high as possible in your roof, or alternatively assemble a three element Yagi in between the rafters in your roof. Thirdly, you could erect a flagpole outside your townhouse with a loose sleeve around the pole attached to the halyard. At night, you could attach a 144 MHz five element Yagi to the sleeve and hoist it up and after completing your QSOs then you can drop it down and remove the antenna. You could attach a flag if you so wish.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There is currently no threat of strong solar flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 20 and 30 m bands will provide lots of DX fun. 60 m will be the best band during day time for shorter distance, local contacts. Please visit the web site spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

** Let us look at some upcoming events:

This afternoon ZS5 Sprint 8 and 9 July the IARU HF Championships 14 to 16 July Ham Radio 2017 at Friedrichshafen, Germany 15 July the RaDAR Challenge 15 July The SARL Winter QRP Contest 23 July the ZS2 Sprint 29 and 30 July the RSGB IOTA Contest

** To conclude our bulletin a quick overview of our main news item:

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This is quite an achievement, well done Dennis and Artie!

And that brings us to the end of this bulletin

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio magazine programme 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The programme can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a pod cast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Emile Venter, ZS6V, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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